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First Committee
16th Meeting
Tuesday, 27 October 1998, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Mernier . . . . . (Belgium)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda items 63 to 80 *(continued)*

Thematic discussion on item subjects; introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman: Yesterday I asked delegations to use the clusters from last year as an informal guideline for the thematic discussion and introduction of draft resolutions over the next six meetings scheduled for this stage of the Committee's work. For the Committee's guidance I have circulated today an informal paper clustering the draft resolutions submitted this year.

I should like to underline again that I am not suggesting a formal structure for the discussion or introduction of draft resolutions. Any delegation may address any item or introduce any draft resolution at any time during the course of this second stage of our work.

As to the suggested clusters for draft resolutions for the first part of the next stage of our work, action on all draft resolutions, I should like delegations to treat the paper I have circulated today as the Chair's preliminary proposal. I request delegations to address their comments on the clusters to a member of the Bureau of their respective regions as soon as possible so that I can take them into account for a formal submission of the cluster paper on Thursday, 29 October, in the afternoon.

As to the Chairman's non-paper that I circulated on 22 October on the rearrangement of agenda items, I propose that the Committee meet informally on Thursday, 29 October, following the adjournment of its formal afternoon meeting. I expect comments on three subjects — whether there should be titles of headings; their wording; and the agenda items under the headings.

I now call on the Committee Secretary to say a few words about the status of draft resolutions.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Almost all the draft resolutions submitted before Friday are available; draft resolutions A/C.1/53/L.14, L.15, L.16, L.47 and L.48 are now at the documents counter. There are only three pending draft resolutions: A/C.1/53/L.45, L.49 and L.50. Those three will be available tomorrow morning.

The Chairman: As no delegation wishes to comment on the organization of work, I call on the first speaker on my list, the representative of Ireland, to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48.

Mr. Macfhionnbhairr (Ireland): I wish to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, entitled: "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", on behalf of the delegations of Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Guatemala, Ireland, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Samoa, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Uruguay and Venezuela.

98-86212 (E)

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The purpose of this draft resolution is to revitalize the way in which we approach the nuclear disarmament agenda. Its intention is to galvanize the international community in common action for the purpose of eradicating these weapons once and for all. It is the prerogative and duty of the membership of the United Nations gathered in the General Assembly to examine and to express the will of the international community on issues of such importance to humanity.

Enacting the proposals contained in this draft will have far-reaching consequences — for the nuclear-weapon States, for those States that have not joined the international community in relinquishing the option to develop nuclear weapons and for the international community as a whole, which has the responsibility to bring about the multilateral, non-discriminatory and universal regime for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The draft resolution proposes an agenda, or the contours of an agenda, but does not presume to supplant other draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament before the Committee. It offers a way forward that is contingent on the demonstration of an unequivocal commitment by the nuclear-weapon States to approach their responsibilities with regard to nuclear disarmament from a novel perspective, namely, the speedy and total elimination of their respective nuclear arsenals. It calls upon them to demonstrate such an undertaking. Without it we face the prospect of the continued existence and indefinite retention of nuclear weapons.

This draft resolution charts an agenda which in broad terms can, and indeed must, be addressed if the international community is seriously to grapple with the elimination of nuclear weapons. The agenda focuses on the need to use existing mechanisms and approaches. It provides the balance between bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral approaches, each of which in its own respect can and must contribute to the pursuit and achievement of nuclear disarmament.

The effects of following the approach set out in this draft resolution would be decisive. These weapons would rapidly be relegated as anachronisms which remain a threat only insofar as the process of their destruction requires cautious handling in conditions of security to be elaborated between the nuclear-weapon States.

The threat of proliferation, which will always remain a concern in a world of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, will ease as a result.

The consequences of ignoring the urgency of speedily and totally eliminating nuclear weapons was borne in on us earlier this year. Let these events be the defining catalyst for us all to act together now. The draft resolution provides the outline of a plan of action. The details of this, as of any plan, can be changed. Timetables can be set. New and alternative approaches can be examined. All these things we can do. We can do little, however, until the nuclear-weapon States have demonstrated an unequivocal commitment to the speedy and total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, to be followed by a new level of engagement in those negotiations, which are a first and integral part of the process leading to nuclear disarmament.

In the draft resolution the sponsors attempt, with a reasonable proposal that builds upon existing, legally binding commitments by the nuclear-weapon States, to secure the final push towards the realization of the article VI provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), thereby enabling the international community to fulfil the goals of the Treaty as a whole.

I wish to respond to a number of criticisms that have been levelled at the draft resolution by a number of delegations. It is claimed that statements made by the sponsors indicate that they are not prepared to consider changes that would make the draft resolution acceptable. In response, the sponsors, who have laboured solidly since the 9 June 1998 joint ministerial declaration on nuclear disarmament (A/53/138) to elaborate a draft resolution that would have the overwhelming support of the international community, have engaged all delegations that have been willing to work with them, and a large number of delegations have engaged in such a dialogue. The sponsors have accordingly amended many paragraphs in the original text to accommodate the concerns of delegations. The sponsors have invited the five nuclear-weapon States to engage in a dialogue on this text.

It is argued that the text presents dangerous new concepts, such as nuclear-weapons-capable States. In response, the Ministers in the 9 June 1998 joint declaration were specific as to the States which were covered by this term, namely, Israel, India and Pakistan. However, to further avoid any possible misapprehension, the sponsors have moved the reference to nuclear-weapons capability after the reference to States, lest there be any suggestion that the sponsors were attempting to create a new status of nuclear-weapons-capable States. The text therefore reads, in the sixth preambular paragraph: "States that are nuclear-weapons capable and that have not acceded to the NPT". There are only three such non-NPT States.

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It is further argued that the text does particular harm by reformulating agreed language on a fissile material cut-off treaty in a way that could prejudge the negotiations. In response I wish to say that early drafts of the draft resolution used a formula for the fissile material treaty which was generic and which could not be misconstrued, as there is agreement in the Conference on Disarmament, a body which proceeds by consensus, on the mandate for these treaty negotiations. However, as a number of delegations preferred the text of the full mandate, the text of the draft resolution has been amended accordingly.

It is argued that at a time when the international community has raised serious concerns about the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests, the draft resolution makes no reference to them and thereby lends aid and comfort to India and Pakistan; that it rewards India and Pakistan for testing; and that it is not in accordance with Security Council resolution 1172 (1998).

The response to that is that there is another draft resolution before the Committee specifically dealing with nuclear testing. The origins of our draft resolution are in a joint ministerial declaration that was in preparation well in advance of recent tests.

The goals of the draft resolution are universal. They are forward-looking and were as relevant before as they are after the recent nuclear tests. This is a proposal for a new agenda, not a response to action taken by certain States. The sponsors' purpose is to focus on actions that are required now. The urgency of immediate action to eliminate nuclear weapons has, however, been heightened by the recent tests.

It is argued that the draft resolution does not acknowledge the threat posed by those States parties to the NPT that do not live up to their obligations under that Treaty. The answer to that is that this draft resolution is a call for an agenda. The draft resolution (A/53/L.18) on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), before the plenary meeting of the General Assembly, considers questions of compliance with safeguards agreements concluded in fulfilment of obligations under articles II and III of the NPT. The Security Council is also apprised of questions relating to proliferation.

It is argued that the draft, by implicitly rejecting the agenda contained in the principles and objectives agreed at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, also tends to undermine the international non-proliferation regime.

The agenda set by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT includes the negotiation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), since concluded; the fissile treaty negotiations, about to begin; and negative security assurances, also under consideration. Our draft calls for the signature or ratification, as appropriate, of the first — paragraph 10; the determined pursuit of the second — paragraph 12; and the conclusion of negotiations on the third — paragraph 17.

The purpose of the draft resolution is to reignite the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, phrased at all times in conformity with the principles and objectives of the NPT and with any decisions or resolutions adopted by the parties to that Treaty. In operative paragraph 15 the draft resolution underlines the importance both of the agenda and the review process set out at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. The entire draft resolution is informed by the sponsors' unequivocal commitment to the NPT and its full implementation.

It is argued that a negative vote is required on this draft resolution to send a sufficiently strong signal that initiatives likely to undermine the global non-proliferation regime are unacceptable. In response, I wish to say that the sponsors of the draft resolution, delegations representing non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, are acting here to protect the NPT, including its non-proliferation provisions. This agenda is an approach which, if adopted by all delegations, would reinforce those provisions.

The text of my statement is being circulated, with an explanatory note on the draft resolution, paragraph by paragraph.

Finally, I should like to reiterate on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution that we are in dialogue with a large number of States, and we invite others to contact us so that consideration can be given to their concerns.

Mr. Paturej (Poland): Since I am speaking in the First Committee for the first time, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your excellent chairmanship and timely commencement of our deliberations. I pledge my full support for your work at this crucial final stage of our deliberations.

I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.38/Rev.1, "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction", sponsored by Canada and Poland.

The initial draft resolution was subject to short but intensive open-ended, private consultations last week, with the participation of all interested delegations. The majority of delegations fully supported the initial draft. Some, however, while expressing general support for the draft required additional consultations and proposed some changes.

On 23 October there was an informal open-ended meeting, with the participation of many delegations, followed by a series of individual consultations. The draft submitted to the Secretariat is a result of these meetings and intensive consultations.

This year's draft resolution is based on last year's, which was adopted without a vote. There is, however, an important difference. For the first time the title of the draft resolution is "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction". We are no longer discussing the Convention's status. This change means that for the first time the draft resolution is entirely devoted to the issue of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The new character of the draft resolution has been reflected in its operative part.

I must stress that to prepare a draft resolution that would be supported by the majority of delegations, if not all, was not an easy task. First, the Chemical Weapons Convention has already been implemented, but only for 18 months. While many tasks have been completed and we are gaining more and more experience in the implementation of all the provisions of the Convention, that experience is still limited.

Secondly, there was a clear need to reflect the implementation in its entirety. That is why, rather than pointing out particular elements or issues stemming from the implementation, we have tried to stress the importance of all the provisions of the Treaty. As a result, the draft repeats all the important elements of last year's resolution, which remain crucial to the success of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution remain the same. In paragraph 5 the Assembly would repeat "the necessity of universal adherence to the Convention, and call upon all States that have not yet done so to become States parties to the Convention without delay". In paragraph 6 it would stress "the importance ... that all possessors of chemical weapons, chemical weapons production facilities or chemical weapons development facilities, including previously declared possessor States, should be among the States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention" and welcome progress to that end.

All States parties would be urged, in paragraph 4, "to meet in full and timely their obligations under the Convention and to support the Organization [for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)] in its implementation activities".

At the same time the draft resolution contains new language which reflects the new state of implementation activities; the General Assembly would, in paragraph 1, note with appreciation "the ongoing work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention, to ensure the full implementation of its provisions, including those for international verification of compliance with it, and to provide a forum for consultation and cooperation among States Parties".

In paragraph 2 the importance of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons would be stressed "in verifying compliance with all the provisions of the Convention as well as promoting timely and efficient accomplishment of all its objectives". I must stress that the new language in paragraphs 1 and 2 is taken entirely from the text of the Convention, specifically, from article VIII, paragraph 1.

At the same time, the draft resolution would welcome the emerging cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and encourage efforts towards the prompt conclusion of a relationship agreement between the United Nations and the OPCW.

We decided to remain the only sponsors of the draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. As has already been stressed, this draft resolution is very short and concise. Any additions to it would endanger the existing balance. There are 120 States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Limited co-sponsorship would mean that only these States parties associated themselves with the draft by co-sponsoring it. Our ultimate goal is to have in forthcoming years the co-sponsorship of all States that have become States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

On behalf of Canada and Poland, I express the hope that the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote, as was the case with last year's draft resolution.

I wish to stress the good atmosphere and extremely positive attitude and approach of all delegations that participated in the consultations, especially in the last fine tuning. This positive atmosphere and readiness to work in a spirit of cooperation went beyond national and group positions and created a sound basis for the speedy conclusion of the drafting exercise.

I should like to highlight a few changes made during recent consultations. "All" has been removed from the middle of paragraph 2, because it was stressed that the OPCW is not verifying compliance with all the provisions of the Convention, since not all of them are verifiable. Moreover, as I have said, paragraphs 1 and 2 reflect entirely the text of the Convention, and "all" does not appear in article VIII, paragraph 1.

New language has been introduced at the end of paragraph 7: ", in accordance with the Convention".

I hope that the changes made will allow the revised draft resolution to be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): I have the honour to introduce on behalf of Mexico, Australia and New Zealand draft resolution, A/C.1/53/L.11, entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty".

Just over two years ago the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was adopted by the General Assembly and opened for signature. Today there are 150 signatories, 21 of which have ratified. Among the signatories are the five nuclear-weapon States, and among the ratifiers are the United Kingdom and France.

The CTBT Preparatory Commission and its provisional Technical Secretariat are now well-established and making good progress towards the establishment of the global verification system. It is clear from national statements made earlier this session that there is the broadest possible support for this Treaty.

While the General Assembly last year made no pronouncement on the status of the CTBT's implementation, it agreed to include this item on our agenda. The sponsors believe that it is appropriate this year for the First Committee to record its appreciation of the extent to which this Treaty has commanded international support and commitment and to encourage the necessary continuing commitment and support that will bring it into force: hence this draft resolution.

The draft resolution is straightforward. It has a single practical focus: to encourage further signature and ratification of the Treaty so as to promote early entry into force and the achievement of universal adherence. In short, this is a draft resolution which its three sponsors hope will attract the support of all members of the Committee. Its adoption without a vote would be the best contribution the Committee could make to the momentum for the CTBT's entry into force and a permanent end to the nuclear testing it bans.

Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia): In this second phase of the First Committee's work, the thematic discussion, my delegation would like to touch upon a subject that in its view is very important, namely, promoting nuclear disarmament and the role of individual States, including small States.

As I pointed out in my earlier intervention, promoting disarmament and international security are not exclusive prerogatives of the big and the powerful. The role of medium, big and small States should not be underestimated. They are playing, collectively or individually, a more active role in the disarmament and confidence-building processes. One such area is of course nuclear disarmament. Though these States do not possess nuclear weapons, they could play a more active and positive role, either collectively or otherwise, in promoting nuclear disarmament. Therefore, the international community, including the United Nations, should encourage and support them in every possible way.

Today more than half the world is covered by a network of nuclear-weapon-free zones, both operating and emerging, as a result of the Antarctic Treaty, and the Treaties of Rarotonga, Bangkok, Tlatelolco and Pelindaba. A positive chance to create additional nuclear-weapon-free zones should be further encouraged in every way in the spirit of the decision of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

It is in this spirit that Mongolia welcomes and supports the efforts of the Central Asian States to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in their subregion, and believes that the recent consultative meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, was instrumental in providing the opportunity for the States of the subregion and nuclear-weapon States to exchange views on the basic elements of the future treaty. It is our hope that the Central Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone will be created before the year 2000. Bearing in mind the importance of the Middle East, we believe that that region should also be turned into a nuclear-weapon-free zone and

that pending the creation of such a zone all the States of the region should refrain, on a reciprocal basis, from producing, acquiring or in any other way possessing nuclear weapons and should make other appropriate commitments and take practical steps in this further direction. Likewise, Mongolia supports the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, duly reflecting, of course, the existing realities.

My delegation believes that even if those nuclear-weapon-free zones are created there are still other subregions, including some in Europe, as well as many individual States, that could also opt for creating nuclear-weapon-free zones or otherwise acquiring other forms of nuclear-weapon-free status, depending, of course, on the specific regional or subregional characteristics and the security concerns of those and other States involved.

My country, Mongolia, is an example. Because of its geographical location, it does not border on any third country except two nuclear-weapon States, with all the ensuing geopolitical realities and complexities this involves, including even the safety of their nuclear installations. Having been fully dependent on one side in the Sino-Soviet dispute, it sided with that Power, forming in fact its forward base against the other, incurring thus — logically — political, military and other forms of pressure from the other Power. The potential danger of an outbreak of conflict on its territory was constantly hanging over it, and Mongolia itself had no control over that situation.

It was for that reason, and driven by the desire to contribute to the cause of the promotion of nuclear disarmament in the post-cold-war period that in 1992 Mongolia declared its territory a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The initiative enjoys widespread international support, as reflected in the Final Document of the twelfth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, and in the support of its two neighbours and other nuclear-weapon States. However, when it comes to the question of the actual creation of such a zone, the hitherto accepted formula does not seem to be fully applicable. There are many reasons. One is that Mongolia stands alone in creating such a zone. In this respect it is in fact a pioneering State, since no State has acquired single-State nuclear-weapon-free status. Moreover, at this stage the nuclear-weapon States have difficulties in accepting the notion of single-State zones, although many States are voicing their support for such zones.

Another reason is that Mongolia stands between two nuclear-weapon States, thus directly affecting their interests.

A third reason is that nuclear security for Mongolia, however important, is but one of the essential elements of world security. Today, when its relations with its two neighbours are good and cooperative, the nuclear-weapon-free status serves more as an additional factor of stability and predictability than a pre-emptive policy. Logically, this in fact in itself should be conducive to genuine and constructive cooperation.

Last but not least, for a small State such as Mongolia, nuclear-weapon-free status would be stronger if its overall security were ensured.

My delegation has been conducting consultations on this matter with the States concerned since the summer of 1997. In the course of those consultations the above specific features of Mongolia have been well understood and recognized by all sides concerned. At this stage we believe that in itself is a big achievement. However, much has still to be done. But we are optimists; we believe that once there is such an understanding, with necessary political will we will be able to arrive quite soon at some arrangement that could accommodate the particular needs and interests of Mongolia, including a strengthening of its nuclear-weapon-free status, the legitimate interests of its neighbours, and the interests and stability of the region in general.

Since we enjoy good-neighbourly relations with the two neighbours, we believe that our arrangement could be looked at more as an insurance policy than a form of pre-emptive diplomacy. It is expected to strengthen both our international security and the nuclear-weapon-free status.

Moreover, mindful of the role and importance of our two neighbours, not only in the region but also in the world, we believe that the future arrangement could be of tremendous importance for international peace and security. Thus, it could in the long run form the basis of an important factor in strengthening stability and predictability in this subregion, and even perhaps form part of a wider regional network of arrangements connected with North-East Asia, Central Asia or even perhaps the Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum (ARF).

We believe that the United Nations, its appropriate departments and disarmament centres, with their wealth of experience, could play a positive role in this endeavour. We look forward to such cooperation. Bearing in mind the quite advanced stage of negotiations on Mongolia's initiative, my delegation, in cooperation with some others,

has submitted draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.10, which will be introduced in the Committee in due time.

Mr. Sulaiman (Nigeria): I have the honour of introducing three draft resolutions.

It is my pleasure on behalf of the African Group to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.9, "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes". A similar draft resolution was first introduced during the General Assembly's forty-third session, in 1988. At that time many doubted its relevance to our work. Nevertheless, concern over the 1986 accident at Chernobyl has led to international cooperation in addressing nuclear subjects, including management of nuclear wastes.

In this connection, we welcome the adoption at Vienna on 5 September 1997 of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, as recommended by the Moscow Summit on Nuclear Safety and Security. We therefore appeal to all States to sign and subsequently to ratify this Convention so that it may enter into force as soon as possible. We also welcome the entry into force of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Convention on Nuclear Safety, which complements and reinforces the existing instruments on the handling of radioactive wastes, such as the Bamako Convention for the African region, the London Convention against the dumping of waste at sea, the Convention for the South Pacific region and the IAEA Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste.

The draft resolution, whose text is the same as in former years, has always been adopted by consensus.

I also have the honour, again on behalf of the African Group, to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.8, "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa".

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa was established in 1986 by General Assembly resolution 42/151 G of 16 December 1985. The Centre, located in Lomé, is charged with providing upon request substantive support for initiatives and other efforts of member States towards the realization of measures of peace, arms limitation and disarmament in the region, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and with coordinating the implementation of regional activities in Africa under the United Nations disarmament programme.

The Centre, despite severe financial constraints, continues to fulfil its mandate by conducting and contributing to efforts to promote wider understanding and cooperation among African States in the areas of peace, disarmament and security.

The Centre has been without a substantive Director since July 1992. We therefore reiterate our call for the appointment of an experienced Lomé-based Director, provided with all the necessary support to revitalize its activities. We also appeal to Member States, as well as to international organizations and foundations, to make voluntary contributions towards revitalizing the Centre's programme of activities. In the same vein, we also express our gratitude to the Governments of Norway and Togo, and to the United Nations, for their valuable contributions towards the sustenance of the Centre.

It is our conviction that this draft resolution will, as has been usual with similar draft resolutions in past years, be adopted by consensus.

I should now like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.29, "United Nations disarmament fellowship training and advisory services", on behalf of the following sponsors: Algeria, Benin, Brazil, China, Cuba, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Myanmar, Nicaragua, the Niger, Pakistan and South Africa, as well as Nigeria.

The year 1998 marks the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations disarmament fellowship training and advisory services. The objectives of the fellowship training programme are varied; they include providing young diplomats with a general background in disarmament and security-related issues, enabling them to gain confidence in discussing disarmament issues, built on their knowledge and understanding, as well as allowing them to improve their negotiating skills while familiarizing themselves with the procedures and practices of disarmament negotiating and deliberating bodies.

In the 20 years of its existence the programme has trained about 500 officials, mostly from developing countries. Many of them are today in positions of responsibility in the field of disarmament in their various Governments.

The records also show that a number of developing countries are finding the programme appropriate and useful for their young diplomats. Indeed, this goes a long way towards proving its relevance to the entire membership and

agenda of the United Nations. In the light of its relevance, therefore, we appeal to Member States to continue to accord the programme the support and assistance it needs in order to increase the number of fellows trained annually to the level of the mandate of the Concluding Document of the twelfth special session of the General Assembly, the second special session devoted to disarmament. This will also make the course content and direction worthy of its name and of the high standard that has been its benchmark since its inception in 1979.

The draft resolution is essentially similar to draft resolutions of previous years. The third preambular paragraph notes with satisfaction that the programme has trained a number of public officials selected from all the geographical regions represented in the United Nations system, in developing greater expertise in disarmament and a better understanding of the concerns of the international community in the field of disarmament and security.

In its operative paragraphs the draft resolution reaffirms the relevant decisions of the programme, as contained in annex IV of the Concluding Document of the twelfth special session, and expresses appreciation to the Governments of Member States, particularly those of Germany and Japan, for inviting the 1997 and 1998 fellows to study selected activities in the field of disarmament, thereby contributing to the fulfilment of the overall objectives of the programme.

The Nigerian delegation wishes to seize this opportunity to express its deep gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Department for Disarmament Affairs for their continued support. Nonetheless, the support of all Member States is required to enable the training programme to continue to achieve its important objectives.

It is the hope of the sponsors of the draft resolution that it will be adopted by consensus, as similar draft resolutions in previous years have been adopted.

Mr. Tauwhare (United Kingdom): First, may I apologize on behalf of Ambassador Soutar, who had intended to speak this afternoon. He has, I fear, been afflicted by a particularly virulent New York bug and — temporarily, I hope — has lost his voice, and so has asked me to speak in his stead.

I want to respond to the representative of Ireland, who introduced draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, on a new agenda for nuclear disarmament. In particular, we have taken careful note of the amendments that have been made to earlier drafts of the draft resolution. While these are welcome, I have to express our regret that they still fall some way short of meeting the United Kingdom's concerns. As a result, we have been forced to conclude that we cannot support this draft, and we intend to vote against it. We wanted to take this opportunity to make clear our reasons for this, before we are faced with having to present a formal explanation of vote, in the hope that the sponsors of the draft resolution will reconsider.

Let me set out briefly five particular concerns that we have with regard to the draft resolution. First, it fails, in our view, to recognize the repeated commitment made by the nuclear-weapon States to the goal of nuclear disarmament, and the practical steps taken by them towards that goal. The United Kingdom is wholly committed to nuclear disarmament and to its obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We have made it clear that when satisfied with progress towards this goal we will ensure that our remaining nuclear weapons are included in multilateral negotiations. Our commitment has regularly been given practical expression, most recently by the measures undertaken in our strategic defence review, which included significant reductions in, and unprecedented transparency about, our nuclear deterrent.

In particular, I would point out the following features of our review: overall, the United Kingdom will maintain fewer than 200 operationally available nuclear warheads, compared with the previously announced ceiling of 300; a Trident submarine on deterrent patrol will carry only 48 warheads, compared with the previously announced ceiling of 96; only one of our four Trident submarines will be on deterrent patrol at any one time, and this submarine's missiles will not be targeted and will routinely be at a notice to fire measured in days,compared with the few minutes' quick-reaction alert sustained during the cold war.

We have also published detailed figures for our defence stocks of fissile material. We are taking steps to put over 50 per cent of our unsafeguarded stocks of plutonium under safeguards. We made it clear back in April 1995 that we had ceased production of such materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. All reprocessing and enrichment operations in the United Kingdom will now take place under international safeguards, thereby effectively already meeting what will undoubtedly be one of the main verification requirements of the fissile material cut-off treaty.

Secondly, the draft resolution implicitly rejects the agenda on the next steps towards nuclear disarmament, which was agreed by consensus by the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and is contained in the principles and objectives document. We remain firmly committed to this agenda and fear that casting it aside, as the draft resolution does, would serve to undermine the international non-proliferation regime. We believe we can best make progress towards nuclear disarmament by practical steps, particularly those set out in the NPT principles and objectives.

The first such step, the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has been achieved. We are now working for its early entry into force; the United Kingdom has ratified it, and looks to others that have not yet done so to follow suit.

The next step identified by the NPT States parties is the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. We have warmly welcomed the long overdue start of such negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and are committed to working hard to secure their successful conclusion.

Thirdly, the draft resolution advocates measures which we on a national basis examined carefully in the context of our strategic defence review, and concluded that they would be at the present time inconsistent with the maintenance of a credible minimum nuclear deterrent.

Fourthly, we find it extraordinary that the draft resolution makes no mention — let alone condemns — the recent nuclear tests by India and Pakistan. It is difficult to see how this failure can be reconciled with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) on those tests. In our view, this failure also serves to undermine the non-proliferation regime.

Finally, the draft resolution fails to acknowledge the threat posed by those States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty that do not comply with their obligations under that Treaty.

The United Kingdom remains ready to support any measure that will make a practical contribution to advancing nuclear disarmament. On a national basis, we believe that we have made significant movement in that direction. Multilaterally, the agenda and priorities are already clear. This draft resolution undermines that agenda and undermines the non-proliferation regimes. We therefore cannot support it, and would ask the sponsors to take these comments into consideration.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): I had not intended to speak today, but I feel I must respond to the introduction by the representative of Ireland of the draft resolution on the new agenda for nuclear disarmament. I listened with much interest and even with a degree of sympathy. Many eminent researchers, experts and important non-governmental organizations have wondered what could be done, in addition to the 1995 programme and until the fissile materials cut-off negotiations are launched, to prevent a loss of momentum in the accelerating trend towards disarmament that we have noted in recent years.

I understand, therefore, the reasons behind the draft resolution, but it is perhaps a little too soon or a little too late. Three questions come to mind. First, is the statement concerning the shortcomings of the nuclear disarmament process well founded? Secondly, is the proposed agenda for nuclear disarmament realistic? Thirdly, is the presentation of the draft resolution timely? The reply of my delegation to all three questions is "No".

Have the shortcomings been correctly assessed? I do not think so, because that would mean ignoring both the progress made in the overall reduction of arsenals and the many phases already passed at the multilateral level. With regard to the first, no one can deny the importance of the process engaged in by the United States of America and the Russian Federation. It is true that there remain a number of important stages to be implemented — particularly the ratification of START II and the launching of negotiations on START III, which today seem rather uncertain — but it is precisely because their achievement is crucial that we should not place them in jeopardy by casting doubt on them.

From a unilateral perspective, I listened with interest to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom. I think I could make a statement on behalf of France very much along the same lines. I will spare the Committee the details today, but I believe the unilateral efforts made by France over a number of years have been truly significant and require an expensive update every few years, something that cannot be expected of a Government.

Still at the unilateral level, my country's efforts have, first, brought about a reduction in the number of nuclear weapons. I shall not recall the history of this process, but simply remind members of the decisions announced in 1996

by the President of the French Republic that resulted in the elimination of the land component of our deterrent force and the adjustment to a sufficient level — the lowest possible level — of the naval and air components. It is appropriate to recall at this point also, since the matter is raised in the draft resolution introduced by Ireland, that France does not have tactical nuclear weapons.

Next, because this seems to be a fashionable topic, I wish to recall the efforts made to reduce our alert status at different stages as the international situation developed, beginning in 1992, with further reductions later; very recently the President of the Republic was able to state that French nuclear weapons were no longer targeted.

Another example concerns not arms but fissile materials: the halting in 1992 of plutonium production for weapons and in 1996 of the production of highly enriched uranium. These facts are well known, and it might be said that there is no point in bringing them up once again, since other nuclear Powers have also announced that they have ceased production. The difference — which I would like to emphasize — is that France took the risk of adopting irreversible measures by dismantling its production facilities, a process now under way at Marcoule and Pierrelatte. Those are the facts.

As regards unilateral measures, I do not think this Committee has forgotten any more than I have the name of Mururoa, which is my third example. Today Mururoa, our test site in the Pacific, is closed. From 30 June to 3 July this year the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) held in Vienna an international conference on the radiological situation on atolls, at which the outcome of the study conducted since 1996 was examined by the international community. The study concluded that there had been no impact on human health or the environment as a result of radiation from residual radioactive material. I should like to highlight the exceptional nature of our initiative. The installations constructed for testing purposes have been dismantled. The whole dismantling operation at Mururoa and Fangataufa will be concluded this year. France is now the only nuclear Power that no longer has a test site.

In fact, both bilateral and unilateral efforts to reduce arsenals contradict the assertion of shortcomings implicit in the draft resolution. That is also true of multilateral efforts. I hardly need recall the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which France has signed and ratified and which we of course want to see enter into force. We therefore hope that in 1999 it will be possible to review the situation and accelerate ratification by States that have signed but not yet ratified, as well as by States that have not yet joined us in the club of signatories.

Above all, at the multilateral level the international community has just entered into the negotiation of a multilateral instrument essential for both non-proliferation and disarmament, known as the fissile material cut-off treaty. That may be one reason for the draft resolution. Perhaps we do not yet realize, because it is so recent, the impact of this change and the heavy responsibility on us to carry out the negotiations successfully. We are at a new stage, which changes perspectives and explains my country's doubts about a new agenda, the purpose of the draft resolution, when we have still not exhausted our 1995 agenda. If the allegation of shortcomings is not well founded, neither is the agenda, because it ignores the facts I have set out and mixes all types of situations and approaches. It takes for granted the success of the cut-off negotiations, which have barely started and which require tremendous efforts, both political and technical, to accommodate the various positions. It combines different situations, such as the commitments assumed by the nuclear Powers and the problem of States, whether or not parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), that are nuclear-weapons capable. This new agenda tries to reconcile the so-called abolitionist approach and the gradual approach — which is the only realistic one.

Therefore, the proposed new agenda does not seem to be a practical measure that can be effectively implemented.

My third question was whether this initiative was timely. Once again my delegation's reply is negative. Why? Because while it is understandable that countries that are not NPT signatories may ignore the agenda established in 1995, it is not to be expected that the Treaty signatories and sponsors of the 1995 decision would gloss over it, or, even worse, implicitly regard it as obsolete, when it is on the way to implementation and the cut-off treaty negotiations have barely begun.

Neither the time chosen nor the suggested procedure — a conference on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament — is right. Bodies already exist for the discussion of these matters. For States parties to the NPT the strengthened review process and the year 2000 Conference will provide the opportunity to assess past achievements, current projects and lessons to be drawn.

For all Member States of the United Nations, a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to

disarmament, which France supports and which it considers should be held in the year 2001, will be the occasion to prepare a new agenda.

Finally, it is normal to want to do better and to move faster. It is tempting to create the impression that this is possible thanks to the drawing up by some of an alternative agenda intended for others. But if the price to be paid is the destruction of an almost universal consensus, that price is too high when success is in doubt.

Mr. Goosen (South Africa): I genuinely did not intend to speak today, and members must excuse me if I do not have prepared notes. I will be referring to some notes I made during the interventions of the Ambassador of France and the representative of the United Kingdom.

Having listened to their remarks about the draft resolution, I am reminded of Shakespeare in that they "protest too much" (*Hamlet, Act III, Scene II*), because what the core element of the draft resolution is a call upon the nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to the speedy and total elimination of their respective nuclear weapons. No matter how hard they try, this language does not in any way undermine or reject the commitment which they made under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It asks that 50 years after the first nuclear-weapons explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki we call on the States that South Africa recognizes as nuclear-weapon States, "to demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to the speedy and total elimination of their respective nuclear weapons and without delay to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to the elimination of these weapons" — and that is language from an International Court of Justice (ICJ) legal opinion — "thereby fulfilling their obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)". (*A/C.1/53/L.48, para. 1*)

I am sure that the representative of the United Kingdom and the Ambassador of France will agree with me that article VI as it currently stands in the NPT is unfulfilled. Surely that is not contested. I will return to that point shortly.

I will concentrate primarily on the remarks of the representative of the United Kingdom, which I think in large measure address the issues raised by the Ambassador of France, except for the element of the timing of the proposal of a new agenda.

South Africa at one stage possessed nuclear weapons and it destroyed them. I presume that for States possessing nuclear weapons the timing might never really quite be right, but we believe that the timing of the proposal in the draft resolution by the States that have associated themselves with it is the correct timing. That is largely an issue of opinion.

I want now to pick up on some of the points made by the representative of the United Kingdom. He said that the draft resolution repeatedly ignored the commitments by the nuclear-weapon States. I should like to ask him where in the draft resolution the commitments of the nuclear-weapon States are continually ignored. When I read through the draft resolution, and I think when everybody else reads through it, we find that there is repeated reference to the commitments by the nuclear-weapon States, including in the lead operative paragraph that I have just read: "thereby fulfilling their obligations" — and we can replace "obligations" with "commitments" if the representative of the United Kingdom insists — "under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)". There is also a preambular paragraph that has much the same kind of language.

The representative of the United Kingdom also made the point that the practical steps and commitments to participate by the nuclear-weapon States have been ignored by the draft resolution. But when I look at the draft resolution I find two preambular paragraphs that deal with the specific issue.

The two preambular paragraphs are — and I am sorry to be a little lengthy:

> "*Welcoming* the achievements to date and the future promise of the START process and the possibility it offers for development as a plurilateral mechanism including all the nuclear-weapon States, for the practical dismantling and destruction of nuclear armaments undertaken in pursuit of the elimination of nuclear weapons,
>
> "*Believing* that there are a number of practical steps that the nuclear-weapon States can and should take immediately before the actual elimination of nuclear arsenals and the development of requisite verification regimes take place, and in this connection noting certain recent unilateral and other steps" (*A/C.1/53/L.48, eleventh and twelfth preambular paragraphs*)

— and I would here read "including the strategic review that the United Kingdom has undertaken". I can assure the representative of the United Kingdom that it was exactly that review that South Africa at least had in mind when this language was being drafted.

And now I come to a favourite topic of mine — and I am sure the Under-Secretary-General will enjoy this — the NPT agenda of the principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. South Africa is accused — something I find slightly amusing — of ignoring and glossing over them, despite the fact that South Africa, of course, was the country that originally proposed these principles and objectives at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. That proposal has largely been recognized as the basis for the agreement eventually reached at that Conference for the indefinite extension of the NPT.

I do not see how the draft resolution could undermine the NPT agenda. I would appreciate greater clarity on that. For South Africa it would be totally unacceptable, and I would be going beyond my instructions, if I were ever to undermine the 1995 NPT principles and objectives. The fact of the matter is that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is the first element of that agenda, has been concluded; unless, of course, it is being suggested that the content of that Treaty, which was negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament, was not comprehensive and that further negotiations might be required under that particular agenda item.

The second point, on fissile material, that is raised in that agenda has been agreed. South Africa welcomed, as did all the other partners in this draft resolution that are members of the Conference on Disarmament, the fissile material treaty negotiations agreement reached in the Conference on Disarmament this year. We will support the restart of those negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament next year. That is a commitment that South Africa has already made.

There are no further elements specifically identified in the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference decision on principles and objectives. This draft resolution, therefore, to our mind, cannot be seen in any way to undermine that agenda. In fact, as my colleague from Ireland mentioned, it reinforces the agenda by calling for the fissile material negotiations to be continued and speedily concluded and also addresses the CTBT issue.

Nuclear tests by India and Pakistan: what certainly amuses me when this issue is raised, and particularly when it is raised in the context of South Africa, is that in every forum in which South Africa participates it has joined in expressing a negative opinion on the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan, unlike some other countries which have spoken in this debate, which, in the most recent expression by the international community at the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference, abstained on the relevant draft resolution. South Africa voted in favour.

South Africa and all the other countries sponsoring this draft resolution have, as I have indicated, participated and strongly put forward their views on Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests. We address specifically in this draft resolution the situation not only of India and Pakistan but also of Israel, the three States that are nuclear-weapons capable and that have not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We call upon them

> "to clearly and urgently reverse the pursuit of all nuclear weapons development or deployment and to refrain from any actions which could undermine regional and international peace and security and the efforts of the international community towards nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation" (*ibid. para. 7*).

What stronger statement could there be than that? Possibly the next paragraph, which reads:

> "*Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to take all the necessary measures which flow from adherence to this instrument;" (*ibid. para. 8*).

I ask again, what could be stronger than that, except perhaps the second operative paragraph after that, which reads:

> "*Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify, unconditionally and without delay, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and, pending the Treaty's entry into force, to observe a moratorium on nuclear tests" (*ibid. para. 10*).

The accusation that has been made against us is absolutely groundless.

I come now to the assertion that the draft resolution fails to recognize the threat posed by States parties to the NPT which are in non-compliance with their obligations. I have attended all of the Preparatory Commission sessions and the Review Conference, and the way I recall it is that the delegations that have participated in drawing up the draft resolution all participated in statements and other measures which have addressed issues that have arisen out of this particular matter. It would be my contention that the whole thrust of the draft resolution, which is to propose the need for a new agenda on nuclear disarmament, is to address that exact issue. We are trying to achieve an agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world. That would be a world where nuclear weapons would not be possessed by the nuclear-weapon States, by the States that remain outside international norms, or by any State that is in non-compliance with any obligations — whether under the NPT, the CTBT or any other agreement.

The draft resolution and the declaration from which it originates are serious attempts by Governments normally thought of as being in the moderate camp on the nuclear disarmament issue to put forward a vision of what is required to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. They have put forward the proposal on the need for a new agenda on the basis that there was a dearth of material on that issue. But, while many proposals have been made in many forums, there is no place where all proposals have been brought together and where — as here in the General Assembly — members of the international community are able to express themselves on that issue.

The draft resolution is not intended to undermine, criticize, or threaten. It is intended to unite moderate countries around the need for a realistic and moderate agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world. That is a commitment we all undertook — nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States alike — in the NPT, which is being held up to us today.

Mr. González (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish):* With reference to the draft resolution we are discussing, I should like to start by voicing my ignorance — or the fact that I was misinformed by the Secretariat — because the representative of France has told us that the draft resolution undermines the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

As I understand it, that fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament has not been convened and there are serious problems about agreeing an agenda and difficulties about the suitability or timeliness of such a fourth special session. How can something that does not exist be undermined? In looking at it from my perhaps Cartesian/Latin American perspective, we do not find much logic in such an argument. With that proviso, my delegation agrees with the very well-substantiated presentation made by the South African delegation with respect to the draft resolution before us.

We are looking at the central conceptual core of the text. How can we not agree with it? It is entirely in keeping with the relevant instruments of international law — the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) for one. My country had some difficulty in signing and ratifying it but we did so in the conviction that we were moving in the right direction and despite the fact that it enshrines a level of discrimination with which many take issue. But with that reservation it does the work for which it was designed.

How then can this undermine something that it is in fact strengthening? Moreover, one cannot consider continuing to grant legitimacy to the possibility that certain States have a nuclear option and others do not. The globalization of the world, the extreme interdependence of our countries nowadays, and the essentially non-conventional nature of the present threats against our States have given rise to a completely new international agenda, and very clearly — a fact I underline — in this new agenda there is no room for the use or possession of nuclear weapons.

I am sure that all delegations here give pride of place to international law, to the establishment of a framework of resolutions on nuclear disarmament and therefore the conclusions of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in its 1996 Advisory Opinion, warned us of the obligation we have to undertake negotiations on this topic in good faith.

One of the preambular paragraphs points out basically that we must not enter the third millennium — which is amusing, because we are all talking as if on 1 January 2000 everything will change — with the prospect that some countries arrogate to themselves a right to consider keeping nuclear weapons for an indefinite period of time. This policy obviously exists if only tacitly, but it is not legitimate. If we look back on what should be our natural and fundamental terms of reference, it is after all the Charter of the United Nations. If we look at the inclusive competences affirmed and reaffirmed in Article 1 of Chapter I, "Purposes and Principles" the Charter talks of maintaining international peace. If one analyses the Charter one finds there is always the linkage between peace and

security. I think I am right in saying that one never finds the word "peace" without the word "security".

Obviously the possession of nuclear weapons introduces a tremendous amount of uncertainty and insecurity, particularly for those countries that do not possess such weapons. If we were therefore to analyse and carry out an exegesis of the Charter we would undoubtedly arrive at the conclusion that we are not being consistent with the provisions, the doctrine, and the examples illustrating the most fundamental articles, such as Article 2, paragraph 4, which prohibits the use or threat of use of force, since the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties in Article 53, if I am not mistaken, states that this is a *jus cogens* right, which means something that is untouchable and cannot be circumvented, since it means preserving the existence of humanity. Obviously, the fundamental interests of humanity are not being safeguarded through the possession of nuclear weapons.

This is almost an extreme situation. The possession of nuclear weapons, by creating a tremendous amount of insecurity and uncertainty, creates a state of tension, leads to confrontation and can open the door to the possibility of the threat of the use of force.

If we analyse the operative paragraphs we might say that they are quite harmless and innocent, they merely reiterate, exhort and urge, there is no legal linkage here or binding mandate, or obligatory, compulsory obligation imposed on States, but we are urged to continue working on the agenda for international security for all nations and for all time. Within this context, we believe that operative paragraph 14 appropriately or adequately reflects the need for a complement to the efforts that are being made in a very central area of international relations. We cannot continue in this vortex, or may I even say this haemorrhage, of draft resolutions in which the topic of nuclear disarmament is deconstructed in some fashion or insufficiently emphasized without there being any kind of international conference during which we can agree on the importance or otherwise of nuclear disarmament and the importance or not of certain countries arrogating to themselves the right to possess nuclear weapons despite the opinion of the International Court of Justice. We think such an international conference would very clearly and consistently help us bring about the attainment of further objectives all of which are designed to strengthen international security.

We believe, therefore, that the draft resolution is wholly meaningful and is entirely in keeping with reality and the new international situation marked by international cooperation. Secondly, it is consistent with and strengthens existing international legal instruments and at the same time it works to dissipate some existing doubts and lends momentum to the much-invoked fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which at this point, as we in this room all know, remains a virtual reality.

I finish on a personal note. I am grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, for having referred to me as the representative of Chile rather than by my name or by my title.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Like the representative of South Africa, I had not intended to seek to speak this afternoon on any of the draft resolutions, since it was our understanding that they were in the process of being introduced. However, following the comments of the representative of the United Kingdom and the Ambassador of France on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48 and the introductory statement by the representative of Ireland, it seems that we have entered into a substantive discussion of the proposed new agenda for nuclear disarmament.

References have also been made in this context to the nuclear tests conducted by India and then by Pakistan. I should like, therefore, to take this opportunity to express some preliminary viewpoints on this draft resolution and on some of the comments that have been made here this afternoon.

First, Pakistan has expressed support and encouragement for the endeavours of the eight countries in trying to promote a consensus on a reinvigorated process of nuclear disarmament at the bilateral, regional and international levels. This is an endeavour worth undertaking under the current international circumstances.

For its part, Pakistan re-evaluates the draft resolution and its contents from the perspective of its conformity with the consensus achieved by the international community at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament, which accorded the highest priority to the realization of nuclear disarmament. It has been pointed out here, and I think that my colleagues from both Chile and South Africa mentioned this, that the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) outlined a very brief agenda — indeed, an agenda that does not reflect a total international consensus, since some countries such as my own were not party to it. In any case, that agenda is virtually exhausted.

The third point of that agenda, which spoke of nuclear disarmament measures, has now to be elaborated and specified. We consider that this draft resolution, as well as other draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament that have been presented here, are aimed at trying to elaborate what the international community can or should do next to promote the goals of nuclear disarmament.

We have our own views. We have studied the draft resolution — at least, the previous version — and have offered concrete comments on it to the sponsors. They have been able to take a few on board, but not many, and we still have problems with the draft resolution which I will mention briefly.

There are in our view three major omissions in the text of the draft resolution. First, there is no reference to the nuclear-war-fighting doctrines espoused by certain nuclear-weapon States, doctrines which emphasize the use of nuclear weapons or threats of use of force even against non-nuclear-weapon States and in very uncertain circumstances. This arbitrary retention of the use of nuclear weapons poses the gravest danger of use in the world today.

Secondly, the draft resolution does not contain any reference to the dangerous developments that are taking place in the fields of the militarization of outer space, anti-satellite weapons, and the development and likely deployment of theatre missile defence systems. These developments are likely to destabilize the relationships between the nuclear-weapon States and lead to a new spiral in the nuclear arms race. This is a matter calling for the urgent prohibition of the development of theatre missile defence systems and anti-satellite systems.

Thirdly, there is no reference in the draft resolution to the question of control over the large stocks of fissile materials at present possessed by a number of nuclear-weapon States. We have had reports that these stocks could fall into the wrong hands. Or they could be used for the purposes of nuclear proliferation. But the draft resolution, even in the paragraph dealing with the fissile materials treaty, does not mention specifically the need to obtain control and international management of these large stockpiles of fissile materials. These are three major omissions that we perceive.

We have some specific comments on the draft resolution with regard to some concepts, such as nuclear-weapons-capable States. This reference is imprecise, and it would be advisable for the success of the new agenda if greater precision could be added as to what exactly is expected of which State in the process of nuclear disarmament. We will suggest some changes to the sponsors of the draft resolution. We are told that they are open to further consultation and negotiation, and my delegation for one would be very happy to participate in such consultations in order to see if some of the problems we have identified could be addressed and overcome so that we would be in a more comfortable position with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, whose motivation we fully support.

In conclusion, I wish to raise one point mentioned by the representative of the United Kingdom and to which my colleague from South Africa responded — that is, to question the relevance of the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan. I do not pretend that this is an irrelevant issue, but I would point out that the international community has addressed it, and it is our concern that some of the nuclear-weapon States are seeking to use this issue and to place an inordinate focus on it in various international forums in order to deflect the attention of the international community from the real problems in the nuclear arena — the problems of the threat of use of nuclear weapons and the existence of more than 25,000 nuclear weapons in the hands of certain States that are on full alert. These and other developments in the nuclear field are much graver in their global import than the tests that were conducted in South Asia. We are prepared to address that issue in a constructive way, and I hope that others who have spoken on this issue will also address it in a constructive and not a denunciatory way. We would be prepared to address that issue in that perspective. But let not the nuclear-weapon States deflect the international community from the real problem in the nuclear field, which is their failure to live up to their commitments for nuclear disarmament. That is one thing we should not allow to happen at this session. I urge all concerned to address that issue as the highest priority.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): The declaration of the eight States and the draft resolution presented today by Ireland are an attempt to overcome the serious concern of the international community over the latest developments in South Asia. Those developments demonstrated the need to unify international efforts to prevent the non-proliferation regime from collapsing and to consolidate its basis in a way that would allow for the achievement of its objectives, the most important of which is the speedy and total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

How can we in the international community work towards achieving that? To me, the only way is to work on the non-nuclear-weapon States, tighten the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime on them, ask them to comply with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and work diligently on the fissile material cut-off treaty. Can we forget the nuclear-weapon States and the nuclear-weapon-capable States and try to ignore the latest developments, which would undermine the NPT and all our efforts in the disarmament field, or should we all try to show a united vision in addressing this problem?

No one will deny that efforts are being made by the nuclear-weapon States in the field of nuclear disarmament. The draft resolution itself in certain peragraphs praises the START Treaty efforts and other efforts made in this regard. But these efforts are not enough to show the commitment undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States in accordance with article VI of the NPT. There is a need to emphasize that commitment and to ask the nuclear-weapon States to do more and work more diligently towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, the draft resolution deals on the same footing with the nuclear-weapon-capable States. It also emphasizes the need for their commitment to the NPT and the CTBT and the need for them to enter into the fissile material cut-off negotiations. These are all steps running in parallel with steps taken by the international community towards nuclear disarmament and leading, in the final analysis, to preserving the integrity of the NPT regime through the activation of nuclear disarmament measures.

Another very important aspect dealt with in this draft resolution is security assurances, which have gained more importance, particularly in current circumstances, and which require the nuclear-weapon States to present more effective assurances that would help consolidate the picture when dealing with nuclear disarmament issues.

Finally, the new agenda is not directed against anybody or against the NPT. On the contrary, it tries to consolidate the NPT. It tries to seek the full implementation of the three decisions and the resolution adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. It tries to strengthen the CTBT system. It tries to make the discussions at the fissile material negotiations, to take place in Geneva, more meaningful and more fruitful, eventually leading, I hope soon, to a complete, effective, integrated system based on the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Felício (Brazil): My delegation did not intend to intervene in this debate, but feels compelled to do so in view of the strong and somewhat unexpected reaction from some nuclear-weapon States regarding draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

Since this seems to be a meeting for asking questions, I should like to ask one question of my own. The difference is that I will also try to give an explanation. The question is: why is such a reaction by the nuclear-weapon States unexpected? It is because their reaction goes against the Treaty obligations they freely entered into; moreover, it also defies logic and a clear opinion given by the International Court of Justice that the nuclear-weapon States should pursue negotiations in good faith aimed at the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

Before dealing with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), may I say that Brazil — and I suppose other countries that have forgone the nuclear option — is often bombarded with pleas to join the Treaty. It has been argued that our support would endorse the best known non-proliferation and disarmament regime ever achieved. For years we were reluctant to accept the logic presented to us that a fair deal was made 30 years ago that the non-nuclear-weapon States would remain so, while the nuclear-weapon States would pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith. We recognize efforts made by nuclear-weapon States to disarm, but their commitments towards the elimination of nuclear weapons are yet to be seriously pursued, and, of course, are yet to be verified.

That leads to another question: what makes countries so different that some, the non-nuclear-weapon States, must have their non-proliferation commitments verified while the nuclear-weapon States expect their disarmament by declaration to be accepted as real proof without the appropriate surveillance by the international community? That is hard to understand.

When my Government decided to accede to the NPT we were convinced that it would add credibility to the Treaty and reinforce our credentials for participating in the debate on and in the quest for nuclear disarmament. When the Brazilian Senate approved the NPT it gave instructions to the Administration to pursue the other part of the deal struck 30 years ago: the elimination of nuclear weapons, which remains to be fulfilled.

These are some of the many reasons behind my Government's decision to join others in the declaration "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world". That is why we co-sponsored draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48. We are instructed to pursue, and will continue to pursue, the objective of nuclear disarmament. As Government representatives, we must be able to interpret the wish of our own societies. I humbly suggest that representatives of nuclear-weapon States who have intervened at this meeting try to interpret the wish of their own societies, which are clearly turning more and more against nuclear weapons.

Brazilian society has already decided on the purpose of the national nuclear programme. It is enshrined in our Constitution that nuclear energy can be used only for peaceful purposes. International commitments entered into by Brazil in good faith, and which we intend to pursue, go in the same direction. We have been acting in a coherent manner in this area by not requesting and not expecting from others obligations that we are not prepared to fulfil ourselves.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I am grateful for the comments that have been made on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48. We wish the Ambassador of the United Kingdom a quick recovery.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, principally, has more sins of omission. As the representative of the United Kingdom has told the Committee, there are four such omissions. It does not recognize unilateral and multilateral efforts towards disarmament that have already been made. It does not recognize the next step in the agenda adopted in 1995. It does not mention the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests. Finally, it contains no reference to the dangers inherent in such testing from the point of view of the international non-proliferation regime.

These are four omissions out of the five shortcomings that the representative of the United Kingdom found in our draft. The fifth is not an omission, but is that the draft resolution advocates measures that would be inconsistent with minimum credible deterrence.

I wonder whether this is not in fact the sole genuine objection there is to the draft resolution. How can omissions be criticized, in particular when they refer to past events, in a draft resolution that is future-oriented, proposing a new agenda — not a retrospective effort but a prospective effort.

Very probably the representative of the United Kingdom is right. Probably we are advocating measures that are inconsistent with doctrines of deterrence. My delegation certainly hopes it is doing so because my delegation is convinced that the doctrines of deterrence in this day and age are not meaningful and there is no rationale for them, although every day new efforts are made to find ways to justify them.

The representative of Pakistan, at the other end of the range of opinions to which we have listened, also finds three sins of omission in the draft resolution. We will not be referring to the militarization of outer space, which is covered by another draft resolution, or to doctrines of deterrence, which is directly in opposition to what the representative of the United Kingdom has upheld, and there is no reference to the stockpiles of fissile material. In operative paragraph 12, however, there is a faithful reproduction of what the Conference on Disarmament had to say. In referring to operative paragraph 12 I should like to point out that there is a mistake in the English version of A/C.1/53/L.48. The operative paragraphs lack numbers. The Spanish and French versions have been numbered but the English version is not so numbered.

Operative paragraph 12, for those representatives with an English text, is the one referring to fissile materials in connection with the decision taken at the Conference on Disarmament.

Again for the benefit of those delegations, I should like to say that there are 21 operative paragraphs. It is one of the longest draft resolutions, but if there are still omissions we, the co-sponsors, are prepared to take into consideration any additional elements and will be very happy to include any reasonable elements that are future-oriented and not looking towards the past. If we were to look to the past we could go right back to 1946, but I do not think that would be very helpful.

Having always admired the Cartesian spirit, I liked the statement by the French Ambassador. She asked three questions of herself. So did my delegation when in June we embarked upon the exercise relating to this initiative. Is the concern about a lack of progress in the field of nuclear disarmament justified or not? It is. We have not seen any advances. On the contrary, we have seen failure. The Preparatory Commission of the NPT Review Conference failed. We have seen a lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament towards the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to

disarmament. We have seen that a crucial treaty, START II, signed almost five years ago, still awaits ratification.

So our concern about the rate of progress and the importance attached to nuclear disarmament is very rational, all the more so in the light of the statements we heard today in which the nuclear Powers told us in very careful language, as they always do when they talk about their commitment to nuclear disarmament. At no time did I hear an unequivocal commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons and a complete elimination of nuclear arsenals was in the offing. I heard nothing about that.

That remains the position of my delegation and that is why we are participating in this initiative. Failing an unequivocal commitment to the complete eradication of nuclear weapons, a world completely free of nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence theories and doctrines will not change, nor will the part played by nuclear weapons in strategic planning or the defence of nuclear-weapon States change either. We will be taking steps and making progress that will not be very meaningful.

The co-sponsors of the draft resolution believe this, the non-governmental organizations believe this, and world public opinion even in the nuclear-weapon States also maintains this position. We are not alone. Is the agenda unrealistic? We hope it is realistic. We think it is proactive, positive and prospective, and we hope it truly does advocate measures that will render the doctrines of deterrence quite obsolete. That would be a realistic position.

Is the presentation of the draft resolution a timely one? Is this the right time or not? We believe that the international non-proliferation regime is very much in question. We have seen cracks in its structure and this initiative is not an attempt to undermine but to strengthen. This initiative has not caused those cracks.

What is the non-proliferation regime today? It is nuclear-weapon-free treaties and zones, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the decisions taken in 1995 and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

On what does it rest? It rests on some very basic premises. The first is that the obligations that are undertaken will be respected in good faith. The second is that the regime is designed to be universal. This year we witnessed events that have called into question these two premises. Whether the obligations have been observed in good faith is very much in doubt. It is sufficient to re-read the minutes of the Conference on Disarmament and also the records of this Committee's meetings. There is a great deal of doubt about the way in which the obligations have been discharged, and I am not referring only to article VI.

As for universality, it is indispensable to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, just as it is for the nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties, the CTBT and even the decisions we took in 1995. The possibility of attaining that universality is called very much into question by the events that occurred this year. That is why it is necessary and urgent to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. The best thing we can do to that end is for all of us together to try to design a new agenda for nuclear disarmament. Let us not forget that the entire non-proliferation regime is only a step, but an indispensable and necessary step, towards disarmament. Only with a clear understanding that nuclear disarmament is something to be reached does the non-proliferation regime enjoy balance and meaningfulness.

That is why a new agenda is necessary, not, as some have said, a new agenda to replace the decisions taken in 1995 but, on the contrary, to clarify the third element of the agenda for nuclear disarmament that was adopted in 1995, which comes after the CTBT and after what we hope will soon be a fissile material cut-off treaty.

What comes next? Here we have some proposals which I believe should be adopted urgently. That is why my delegation has co-sponsored this important draft resolution. I agree there are omissions; there are a number of things we have not put in here. There are some things we could add to make everyone happy and elicit a consensus. Perhaps we will not achieve consensus this year, but we do not lose the hope of achieving consensus next year or the year after. This draft resolution, we hope, has a brilliant future.

Mr. Geoosen (South Africa): I apologize for speaking again. The last time I spoke was to respond to the nuclear-weapon States. Having now heard an intervention by a State not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Pakistan, I feel as compelled to respond as I did the last time.

I started my earlier intervention with a theatrical reference, when, referring to the statements which had just preceded mine, I said that it seemed to me that they did "protest too much" (*Hamlet, Act III, scene II*). Let me continue in that vein and say that Ambassador De Icaza is a hard act to follow, but I will try.

We are grateful to the delegation of Pakistan for the support and encouragement that it gives, as we are grateful to others for the support and encouragement that they give. The Ambassador of Pakistan refers to a total international consensus. Yes, we are seeking a consensus and we are particularly seeking a consensus within the middle ground of this issue, which has lain fallow for such a long time, with the debate on nuclear disarmament being dictated by the two extremes of that debate.

The proposal that has been put forward, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, is not intended to be an agenda of partial motives. It is, as I have said, intended to be the agenda of the middle ground, which we hope will expand to form the total international consensus on how this issue should be addressed in the future.

The Ambassador of Pakistan referred to some major omissions, and the Ambassador of Mexico addressed some of those. I would add just one element to what the Ambassador of Mexico said, with regard to the stocks of fissile material. Pakistan, like South Africa, joined the consensus in the Conference on Disarmament on the establishment

> "under Item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament', on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein" (*A/C.1/53/L.48*, para. 12*),

which allows the issue of stocks to be addressed in the negotiations.

The Ambassador of Pakistan also referred to a rather older text when referring to nuclear-weapons-capable States. This issue has already been addressed in this debate by my colleague from Ireland, who pointed out to all those participating in this debate that this language had been changed to read more accurately,

> "those three States that are nuclear-weapons capable and that have not acceded to the NPT have failed to renounce their nuclear-weapons option" (*ibid., sixth preambular paragraph*).

The Ambassador of Pakistan then went on to say that the nuclear-weapon States were trying to deflect the debate that we are having in disarmament circles today to address only the issue of nuclear testing. My answer to him on this issue — and I know the point was not directed to me, but it is all part of the same debate. The nuclear-weapon States are not able to take nuclear disarmament out of the debate, nor can the Ambassador of Pakistan take the nuclear-testing issue out of the debate. None of these issues can be separated. They are all part of the same issue, and our draft resolution attempts, I believe successfully, to address that issue.

The Ambassador of Pakistan said that he has some suggested changes. Our delegation would encourage him to continue with his engagement. He is correct; he has been engaged with the sponsors of the draft resolution; we have taken on board some of the suggestions he has made, and they are reflected in the text. We would encourage him to continue with that engagement, in the same way as we encourage the five nuclear-weapon States and all other delegations to engage with us on that. Those engagements have been particularly successful with the States that have participated — I underline "participated" — in engagement with the sponsors on the draft resolution.

I know it was particularly disappointing — and the nuclear-weapon States, I am sure, feel as disappointed as I was — that there was a lack of engagement by them in the meeting that took place between ourselves and them on the issue. We certainly look forward, if they will not feel it necessary to wait until the last moment to express their concerns, to being able to address them through engagement at an earlier stage as well.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): It was not my intention either to ask to speak today, but since several references have been made to India with regard to the "new agenda" draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48, I feel it necessary to make the following observations.

We understand that the draft resolution was the result of consultations with several delegations. India was not involved in this process, except for two brief opportunities last week. Therefore, the draft resolution does not reflect our views on several issues contained in it. These relate not only to specific paragraphs but also to the approach to nuclear disarmament adopted in the draft resolution.

We will present our views on the draft resolution at the appropriate stage of the Committee's deliberations.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.